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metroNEWS

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**IDEAS WORTH
EXPLORING**

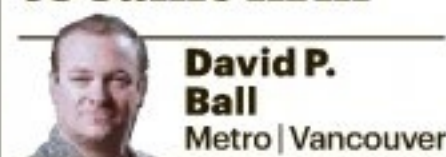
Ridesharing and three other big political
pitches that have experts excited

metroNEWS

Megaproject put under microscope

PORT MANN BRIDGE

**Oversight —
and its review
— outsourced
to same firm**



The B.C. Liberals are under fire for hiring a major donor, accounting giant KPMG, to oversee work on the \$3.3-billion Port Mann Bridge — at the same time KPMG was doing a “billing audit” and reviewing the project’s invoicing process.

The project, which the province called “the largest transportation infrastructure project in British Columbia’s history,” also sparked concerns about outsourcing oversight of taxpayers’ billions on megaprojects to the private sector.

“When we’re building large

capital projects, they should be open and transparent,” B.C. NDP Leader John Horgan told Metro.

“Not only are they doing the financing to their advantage, but now they’re auditing that financing.... This is completely unacceptable.”

With Tuesday’s election looming, this revelation comes amid ongoing controversies around political donations, government transparency and how the provincial government involves the private sector in multibillion-dollar infrastructure projects.

One industry sector, accounting, gave the B.C. Liberals nearly \$1 million since 2005. The biggest donor: KPMG. It donated \$368,989 over 12 years, according to Elections B.C., double what its next two largest rivals gave.

Since 2011, KPMG received government contracts worth \$54 million — nearly a third of that from the transportation and infrastructure ministry’s Transportation Investment Corp. (TI Corp.), the Crown corporation



**Let’s get the public sector in
charge of public projects.**

Dermod Travis

created for the Port Mann bridge.

Metro reported that in August 2009, five months after the signing of that contract, the B.C. government’s authority representative overseeing work on the bridge — essentially B.C.’s foreman — was hired by KPMG Canada as its head of global infrastructure and oversaw a review of the project’s invoicing.

Now, Metro has learned that Gary Webster in fact kept his role as authority representative after moving to KPMG. Webster offered to “relinquish” that role, according to KPMG, but his TI Corp. supervisor, Garry Dawson, requested KPMG’s contract be changed to keep Webster on. This meant Webster was authority representative and overseeing the invoicing review at the same time.

Dermod Travis, executive director of Integrity B.C., said it’s unclear how Webster or KPMG were chosen.

“Why did the government have to go to the private sector to do a job someone in the public sector should do?” he asked.

Metro requested all written communications between Webster and Dawson from Aug. 1, 2009 until July 2010 but there weren’t “any records” found.

There is no suggestion that Webster, who didn’t respond to interview requests, or KPMG engaged in any improper behaviour. A KPMG spokesperson declined an interview, citing “obligations over client confidentiality and third-party independence,” but wrote in an email that Webster’s Port Mann roles involved an “express absence of any conflict.”

Continued on page 4



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4 ELECTION PLATFORM IDEAS WORTH EXPLORING

Believe it or not, elections aren't just about mudslinging, opinion polls and attack ads. They are a time for political parties to present their boldest visions of the future to British Columbia voters and spur innovation and thinking that could benefit the province. Without having them endorse any one party, Metro asked experts to pick out various items in Liberal, NDP and Green party platforms and tell readers why they think it's "an idea worth exploring."

MATT KIELTYKA METRO

 **BC Votes 2017**

1 \$10-a-day child care

Sharon Gregson of the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of B.C. calls \$10-a-day child care an "equal opportunity good idea."

It was a model created in the community by experts and grassroots organizations and pitched to all three major political parties in the province. In the end, only the NDP chose to adopt it in its official platform.

"This \$10-a-day plan is really made as a doable, credible and costed response to the child-care chaos that exists across B.C. now," said Gregson. "It deals with affordability for families, it deals with creating more quality spaces and it deals with investing in the workforce and creating jobs. You can't fix child care without doing all three of those things."

Questions remain how the plan — which the NDP would roll out over 10 years — would be fully paid for, but Gregson says it will eventually pay for itself as single parents go off welfare, more women join the labour force and children ultimately are more successful at school.



THE CANADIAN PRESS



JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO FILE

4 Supporting renters

Another symbolic shift Kershaw sees in this election is the NDP's support for renters with its proposed refundable renter's rebate of \$400.

"Our lab reflected a lot on the NDP's commitment of that \$400 a year for renters," said Kershaw. "On one hand, you have heard Christy Clark come up with a really great line at the leaders' debate that \$1 a day doesn't make rent more affordable. And she's right."

But in this case — and with more than 50 per cent of Vancouverites already renting — it's the thought that counts.

"For a long time, the majority of public subsidies for housing has gone primarily to home owners," Kershaw said. "The \$400 for renters is, to some degree, the NDP saying, 'We're going to level that playing field.'"

"That is significant because going forward, more and more British Columbians, especially young British Columbians, are going to be renters."

2 Ridesharing



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

When the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association conducted its Re-Imagine consultations in 2015, executive director Charles Gauthier said ridesharing services like Uber were a hot topic, especially among young people.

"It's definitely something we heard loud and clear that people want, and they want to sooner rather than later," Gauthier told Metro. "What we heard is how difficult it

is to access cab services. And coupled with the fact we don't have a 24-hour transit system across the board, rideshare fills a gap."

Gauthier acknowledges ridesharing can be disruptive, especially to the taxi industry, but says it will create jobs and make getting around more convenient.

The B.C. Liberals have promised in its platform to make ridesharing a reality as early as this holiday season and will increase funding and supports for taxi companies to limit the damage.

The NDP's platform says only that it will strive to create a "level playing field" that doesn't hurt taxi companies and slams the Liberals for its stance.

The Green Party platform says it will help "facilitate" ridesharing and other transportation options.

3 Education first



THE CANADIAN PRESS

There are certain things University of British Columbia School of Population Health professor Paul Kershaw expects when he reads election platforms. The one constant is that health-care funding always accounts for the biggest chunk of new investment, no matter the party.

Until now.

For the first time since Kershaw can remember, a B.C. political party has put forward a platform where health-care funding doesn't come first.

The B.C. Green Party is proposing to make child

care and education its top spending commitment, devoting \$2.4 billion in new spending compared to approximately \$900 million for medical care (pretty much matching Liberal and NDP funding for that), according to Kershaw's Generation Squeeze think tank.

The focus on youth could mean significant health-care savings later in life. "That's been a focus of research for the School of Population Health for decades, but I've never see it in a platform before," said Kershaw. "It's not only possible (to curb health-care costs long-term), the evidence is clear that will happen over time. When kids are being vulnerable in kindergarten, they're more likely to fail, they're more likely to go to jail and they're more likely to wind up sick as adults in ways that are preventable now."

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Power kept in 'close-knit circle'

Continued from front page

Started in March 2009, the \$3.3-billion Port Mann Bridge and Highway 1 project was finished in 2015 — at \$1 billion more than its “fixed-price” contract.

Gary Webster, the province's authority representative overseeing work on the bridge in 2009, was hired by KPMG and placed in charge of a "billing audit" and "invoicing process" review of the project, according to company documents obtained by Metro.

But spokeswoman Tenille Kennedy called any suggestion of a "conflict" in Webster's roles at KPMG and TI Corp. "unproven ... misleading and false" in an email and that "the nature of Mr. Webster's role as authority representative" had been shown in court to have "the express absence of any conflict."

Nonetheless, B.C. NDP Leader John Horgan said it raises bigger questions about B.C. contracting out taxpayer oversight on public-private partnerships (P3) and private-sector design-build projects like Port Mann.

"The cross-pollination between these people and the P3



The Port Mann Bridge, which the provincial government called “the largest transportation infrastructure project in British Columbia’s history.” STUART MCCALL/NORTH LIGHT

advocates, transferring public wealth to private hands, is quite extraordinary," he said. "You don't work for the people if you're working for your donors."

Soon after Webster's move to KPMG, the firm listed among his authority representative duties "progress billing," "quarterly

progress billing audit" and "detailed audit of DB Contractor's value assessment," according to an Aug. 26, 2009, letter. TI Corp. then "retained KPMG in September 2009 to review a contractor's invoicing process," according to a B.C. Supreme Court 2012 ruling.

But KPMG countered that "it is only officers of TI Corp. who have authority to authorize and approve changes and invoices for payment." Under the Design Build Agreement, the authority representative receives all invoices, inspects work done and "the authority

BY THE NUMBERS

\$54M

Value of B.C. contracts awarded to KPMG since 2011

\$368K

Donations by KPMG and its directors to the B.C. Liberals since 2005

the message to potential bidders that B.C. is a closed shop and there's no point in bidding."

TI Corp. declined comment, citing rules barring government and Crown corporation staff from speaking to media during an election period. However, when Metro first contacted it last fall, spokesman Greg Johnson said B.C.'s auditor general audits it annually, and KPMG is "an international leader in business management, accounting and oversight of small- and large-scale public and private projects.... In hiring KPMG, there's an expectation that all work will meet or exceed their industry's standards for quality, integrity and accountability."

B.C. Liberal candidate Todd Stone, transportation and infrastructure minister from 2013 until the election campaign, was not available for an interview. B.C. Liberal spokeswoman Alexis Pavlich emailed a statement explaining that "all government contracts like the ones awarded to KPMG are done by public servants. It is simply wrong and untrue to suggest bureaucrats are influenced by the allegation you are making" about political donations. DAVID P. BALL/METRO

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FLOODING

Search goes on for two washed away

The search continues for two men missing as flooding continues to plague British Columbia's Interior, and the possibility of further rain and snowmelt has the province bracing for more.

Warm temperatures and heavy rainfall have contributed to overflowing waterways and destructive mudslides across significant portions of southern British Columbia.

RCMP spokesman Dan Moskaluk said on Sunday that

Cassidy Clayton, a fire chief in Cache Creek, remains unaccounted for two days after he was believed to have been swept away by a swollen waterway west of Kamloops.

The 59-year-old man was last known to be checking water levels in Cache Creek early Friday and his vehicle was later found at the site.

The Mounties say Clayton is presumed dead and the search has turned into a recovery effort.

A statement from the Columbia Shuswap Regional District says an urban search and rescue team from Vancouver continues to look for a 76-year-old man whose home north of Salmon Arm was "completely enveloped" in a mudslide Saturday.

The worst may be over as water levels recede through western parts of affected areas, including the south and central Okanagan and the Kootenay region, B.C.'s River Forecast Centre said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Robertson backs two NDP Georges

BC Votes 2017

Heyman, Chow get mayor's seal of approval

Wanyee Li
Metro | Vancouver

Vancouver's mayor is throwing his support behind two BC NDP candidates running in battleground ridings in the provincial election — George Heyman and George Chow.

Heyman, who was first elected as an MLA for Vancouver-Fairview in 2013, and Chow, a former city councillor running in Vancouver-Fraserview, will represent the Vancouverites' interests well, said Mayor Gregor Robertson.

"I feel that it's important to have Chow and Heyman elected to represent Vancouver, particularly for voters who are concerned about transit and environment."

He says a BC Liberal government would postpone the start of transit projects the city has long waited for, such as the Broadway subway.

"We can't afford to delay any longer. That's the big red flag," he told Metro in a phone interview.

The BC Liberals promised to provide the province's \$2.2-million share of the funding for transit improvements in the Lower Mainland but has said it will hold a referendum to determine what funding models cities can use to raise their share of the funding.

A 2014 transit referendum on a proposed 0.5 per cent sales tax failed.

Another referendum "would be brutal," said Robertson.



Mayor Gregor Robertson, top, supports George Heyman, bottom right, and George Chow. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO FILE; INSET: CONTRIBUTED

Meanwhile, the NDP has committed to working with Metro Vancouver's mayors to help cities come up with the remaining funds. Robertson says the Mayors' Council wants to see either a regional carbon tax or road pricing.

He also expressed frustration at the BC Liberal's promise to prevent the city from discour-

aging natural gas use in new buildings, calling it "bizarre" and "undemocratic." The move away from natural gas is an important part of the City's strategy to reduce pollution, he said.

Robertson served as a NDP MLA for Vancouver-Fairview from 2005 until his run for mayor in 2008.



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Moms help moms

FOOD INSECURITY

Campaign aims to aid those with kids in countries facing famine



Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

A trip to East Africa last fall changed Danny Glenwright's perspective on the famine crisis affecting millions of people.

The executive director of Action Against Hunger Canada was visiting various projects the charity group runs in the region, helping to build resilience in communities affected by food shortage and drought. That's when he realized the crisis was inflicting more burden to women and young mothers.

"You see moms walking miles from across the desert with their babies," he said, describing a semi-nomadic lifestyle that forces people to move around searching for water. "It's shocking. There's just not been so much attention



Danny Glenwright, executive director of Action Against Hunger.
EDUARDO LIMA/METRO

paid to some of these places and the issues they're facing."

His organization wants Canadian mothers to know about the plight of these women — and to lend a helping hand. A new campaign, Care for Mom, is working with yoga studios and gyms across the country to drum up a "mother to mother" support.

Glenwright said the goal of the campaign is to introduce

Canadian mothers to the issue of food insecurity that's affecting other mothers, and that they can make a difference.

The United Nations has already declared a state of famine in some parts of South Sudan, and has warned that three other countries — Somalia, northern Nigeria and Yemen — could soon fall into the same situation if humanitarian efforts are not increased.

DETAILS
The United Nations says it needs \$4.4 billion to avert the full-blown famine situation in South Sudan, Somalia, northern Nigeria and Yemen. As of mid-April, only \$984 million had been secured.
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'France has won' after Le Pen loss

ELECTION

Pro-EU Macron will be nation's youngest ever president

Ripping up France's political map, voters elected independent centrist Emmanuel Macron as the country's youngest president Sunday, delivering a resounding victory to the unabashedly pro-European former investment banker and strengthening France's place as a central pillar of the European Union.

At a victory party outside the Louvre Museum in Paris, Macron supporters roared with delight at the news, waving red, white and blue tricolour flags. The jubilant crowd swelled to thousands as the night wore on. "A new page in our long history is opening tonight. I want it to be one of hope and renewed confidence," Macron said.

Marine Le Pen, his far-right



Emmanuel Macron won the presidential election on Sunday. GETTY IMAGES

opponent in the presidential runoff, quickly called the 39-year-old Macron to concede defeat after voters rejected her "French-first" nationalism by a large margin. Macron, in a solemn televised victory speech, vowed to heal the social divisions exposed by France's acrimonious election campaign.

"I know the divisions in our nation that led some to extreme votes. I respect them," he said. "I know the anger, the anxiety, the doubts that a large number of you also expressed. It is my

responsibility to hear them."

The result wasn't even close: With four-fifths of votes counted, Macron had 64 per cent support to Le Pen's 36 per cent.

"France has won!" Macron said in an address to supporters. "Everyone said it was impossible. But they did not know France!"

Saying Le Pen voters backed her because they were angry, he vowed: "I will do everything in the five years to come so there is no more reason to vote for the extremes."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Some of the recently freed girls in Abuja, Nigeria. AP

NIGERIA

Boko Haram releases 82 captive girls

Five Boko Haram commanders were released in exchange for the freedom of 82 Chibok schoolgirls kidnapped by the extremist group three years ago, a Nigerian government official said Sunday, as the girls were expected to meet with the country's president and their families.

The confirmation of the prisoner swap came a day after the young women were liberated. The official spoke on condition of anonymity as he was not authorized to speak to reporters on the matter.

There was no immediate comment about the exchange from the Nigerian presidency or Boko Haram, which has links to Daesh.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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URBAN ETIQUETTE ELLEN VANSTONE



Dear Ellen,

I'm going to a close friend's wedding in June and he wants me to give the toast to the bride. I told him I have severe stage fright, but he insists. Is there a polite way to get out of it and still stay friends with him and his wife-to-be?

Thanks,
Mr. Terrified

Dear Mr. Terrified,

You are in good company. According to the Internet, singers Lorde and Adele have both been known to throw up before going on stage. British actor Stephen Fry got so scared about performing in a play in London's West End in 1995 that he fled the country and ended up in Bruges, Belgium. He needed 17 years before he was ready to get back onstage. Another British acting god, Laurence Olivier, fought off paralyzing stage fright by standing backstage and furiously addressing the audience as "you bastards!"

I'm sure your stage fright is just as real as theirs, but there's no need to repeat such behaviours. If your stage fright is bad enough to make you vomit, want to flee the country or erupt in profanities, then the polite thing to do is tell your friend you can't toast the bride for medical reasons — and then produce a doctor's note. Seriously, if you're that incapacitated, it wouldn't hurt to see someone and talk about it.

But if it's just normal performance anxiety, which most human beings have in one form or another, then you have to

swallow your pride and do it anyway.

It doesn't matter if you're tongue-tied, awkward and bound to make a fool of yourself. People love that kind of disastrous display at weddings. And no matter how ridiculous you look or feel, the speech itself can still be a resounding success.

All you need to do is prepare. Write your speech ahead of time and practice delivering it. If you don't know what to write, ask

for help from a witty friend who also knows and loves the bride and groom, or use a professional wedding speechwriter, which you can find online at weddings.ca or any number of other websites (it's a growing business, which only proves my point that this is a very common problem). Look at samples of their work and make sure they fit your budget. If you decide to use someone, and they're any good, they'll interview you about your relationship to the

couple and draft something you can deliver with pride.

Finally, here's the advice I give myself when I'm nervous about speaking to a group: "It's not about you, you narcissistic idiot! Stop thinking about yourself, and stick to the material!"

Rather rude, but as long as you restrict it to quiet, personal use, you are most welcome to it.

Need advice?
Email Ellen:
askellen@metronews.ca



Ani Castillo

VICKY MOCHAMA

Do black female writers feel valued in Canadian media?

As a black female writer, the decision by journalist and activist Desmond Cole to leave the Toronto Star's opinion pages has left me thinking.

In his blog post, Cole wonders if other black writers in Canada will have a chance to thrive.

Specifically, he shouts out black women. As he told me by phone: "There are more barriers for them than there have been for me."

I asked a few black female writers whether they felt they could work in Canadian media.

"Honestly, I feel like I can but I also feel I have to censor myself a bit, you know?" said Brnesh Berhe, a writer from Edmonton.

Septembre Anderson, a former journalist, didn't feel like she could at all: "I've realized that there is only space in Canadian media for moderate black men journalists and have moved on to greener pastures."

The ones who are sticking with journalism aren't hopeful about Canadian media. "I think that Canadian media particularly doesn't value racialized writers," said Brittany Amofah. "We're disposable or used for a particular thing/column. But not perhaps as an ongoing voice."

Many of them spoke on the pressure to be a capital B black voice. I know I waver between resisting it and taking advantage of the opportunities I'm given, even when they're racialized.

"Canadian media was too white and marginalizing.

When they did want me to write it was always really in a way that pigeonholed me as 'a Muslim woman,'" said Sarah Hagi, a writer for Vice Canada. Hagi is one of the few black women who has a job in media, but she credits American publications for her freelance work.

Amani Bin Shikhan said, "There are unspoken assumptions that come with the territory of being a culture writer who also happens to be a black, Muslim woman, but it's in Canadian media that I feel those limitations on what I can say — and how I can say it — most."

These are some of the subtle and overt ways that anti-black racism works.

It's the pressure to lower one's voice. It's having your platform shrunk. It's the shifting sands on which one is meant to build. It's in picking between work you love and doing what is right.

Cole's treatment at a publication I have trusted and the experience of brilliant black women leave me with unease. My question isn't so much if black — and racialized — writers in Canada will get the space to be a multiplicity of identities.

That I am one of a few black writers with a large platform is not a credit to me. It's an indictment of an industry that does not value black voices.

My question is: Can someone tell me how many of us are allowed in?

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Cultural slights in the spotlight

ART

Indigenous groups say appropriation is an old battle

The work of Toronto painter Amanda PL is infused with bright colours and bold outlines often associated with an Indigenous art style.

But for many of those familiar with the Woodland School of Art, as the genre is also known, it smacks of cultural appropriation by a young artist with no claim to the tradition.

Outrage over Amanda PL's work has renewed debate over who has the right to use and profit from specific customs.

It's a decades-old problem that is only gradually being understood in a field where ideas and images are continually borrowed, traded and reinvented, say observers.

B.C. lawyer Vanessa Udy says the broader public seems to be becoming more sensitive to possible cultural slights.

But the onus of identifying them falls on the person who finds it offensive, and that can be difficult to determine and articulate at times.

There's no easy formula to apply when feelings are hurt — Udy notes each case requires

a nuanced evaluation.

"Is it a person from a group who is in power over a group that is more dispossessed? Does the commodification of their culture put down their culture? Will it create negative stereotypes in the eyes of others?" explains Udy, an intellectual property lawyer who returned to school after seven years of practice to study aboriginal law.

"That's part of the problem of cultural appropriation, and why people don't always seem to get it is because it is an intellectually demanding process to go through in analyzing each case."

The Toronto gallery that planned to exhibit Amanda PL's work was quick to cancel when two complaints came in, says co-owner Tony Magee, who adds he's now fielding complaints from those angered by the cancellation.

"We didn't make our decision (to cancel) out of political correctness. We didn't do it as caving to pressure. We did it because we opened our eyes," says Magee, whose shop opened in January.

"It's really offensive to have people accuse us of caving in and not being willing to stand up for what we believe in. Well, we are standing up for what we believe in."

Amanda PL has said her work was inspired by the Woodland



Toronto artist Amanda PL's work (right) and Norval Morrisseau's painting *Androgyny*, which hangs in the ballroom at Rideau Hall in Ottawa (above). Amanda PL has acknowledged that her work bears a similarity to that of Morrisseau's. For those steeped in the Woodland School of Art, as the genre is known, Amanda PL's work smacks of cultural appropriation by a young artist with no claim to the tradition. THE CANADIAN PRESS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

school and has acknowledged a similarity to the work of Anishinaabe artist Norval Morrisseau.

The problem for many is that she's white, and seems to have made no effort to consult with the Anishinaabe community even after vociferous protest.

The flap follows an uproar at the Whitney Biennial last month, when Brooklyn, N.Y.-based artist Dana Schutz came under fire for her abstract painting *Open Casket*. It depicts the mutilated face

of lynching victim Emmett Till at his 1955 funeral. The work sparked outrage among several African-American artists offended that a white woman would tackle the subject, especially since it was a white woman whose unfounded accusations led to Till's murder. The Whitney has refused to remove the painting, saying the museum provides a platform to explore critical issues.

But the difference here is that Schutz created the work



as a reaction to last year's Black Lives Matter protests, notes

Magee. She has also said she has no intention of selling it.

There's certainly room for culture to be borrowed, shared and reinvented, says the man in charge of Indigenous art at the National Gallery of Canada.

"Knowledge of cultural tenets and beliefs move back and forth across cultures through history. That's probably a good thing," says Greg Hill, who is of Mohawk descent and from the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory. "It becomes a problem when things are borrowed or taken and they're used out of context or they're misunderstood, they're not understood and they're unknowingly or purposefully used in an inappropriate way."

He points to strict rules within various cultural groups about who can do what, and who has the right to inherit stories and imagery.

"These things are passed down from generation to generation. It's really ignorant to just come in and take something and not acknowledge when it's being pointed out to you that there might be a problem with what you're doing," says Hill, senior Audain curator of Indigenous art.

He points to the collaboration between Métis artist Christi Belcourt and the fashion house of Valentino as one example of how things can go right. The Italian designer incorporated images from one of Belcourt's paintings into his 2016 Resort line. "She was contacted. She was compensated and credited," says Hill.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

“It's really ignorant to take something and not acknowledge when it's being pointed out that there might be a problem with what you're doing. Greg Hill



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Canadians spring for asparagus

FRESH HARVEST

Nutrient rich, abundant crop is an industry success story

Owen Roberts
Urban Cowboy



Odds are the fresh Ontario asparagus you now see in stores — the first stock of the season — is tasty Guelph Millennium. It's become a popular local food, a made-in-Ontario success story, credited by farmers for breathing life into what's become a \$30-million crop.

"If not for Guelph Millennium, we would not have a viable industry in Ontario today," says Bernie Solymar, executive director of the Asparagus Growers of Ontario. "That's the bottom line."

May is shaping up to be a great month for asparagus, Ontario's earliest commercial field crop. Warm spring days have arrived, and varieties such as Guelph Millennium are leaping out of the ground.

In fact, once asparagus breaks through the soil, farmers say you can actually sit and watch it climb skyward. Indeed, it can grow as much as 25 cm in a single day.

When it reaches its peak, about two weeks from now, farmers will have their hands full — literally, because they harvest the crop by hand, with a knife. It grows so fast that on hot days they have to cut it twice a day.

But they really don't mind. It's money in the bank.

To farmers, a crop's output, called "yield," is vital. To stay afloat, farmers have to be profitable. One way they do it is by growing high yielding crop varieties.

For asparagus farmers, that's



The asparagus you are cooking this week was probably grown, harvested and prepared similar to the way Charles Welsh (top right) does at Welsh Bros. Farm near Scotland, Ont. MAIN PHOTO ISTOCK, ALL OTHER PHOTOS LANCE MCMILLAN /FOR METRO



FACTOIDS of FARMING



Tasty in any colour

When asparagus surfaces each year, it turns green once it's exposed to sunlight, thanks to photosynthesis. Farmers can disrupt that process by mounding soil on top of it, as it starts to shoot through the ground. Depriving the plant of sunlight causes it to stay white. Besides green and white asparagus, some markets also feature asparagus with a gene that makes it purple.

What's that smell?

If your pee smells odd after eating asparagus, pat yourself on the back. The Asparagus Farmers of Ontario say the smell comes from

"sulfurous amino acids" that are released from the vegetable during digestion, which only one quarter of people can smell. If you sense a funny fragrance, it says, "That means you're not only normal, you have a good nose."

Owen Roberts is an agricultural journalist at the University of Guelph. Follow him on Twitter at @TheUrbanCowboy.



FARM links

More about asparagus online

■ **Recipe ideas using asparagus**
asparagus.on.ca/recipes

■ **Where to buy asparagus seed**
asparagus.on.ca

■ **Where to buy local asparagus**
asparagus.on.ca/buy-local

■ **Take our poll**
In addition to being healthy and abundant, asparagus can be part of a variety of dishes. What is your favourite way to cook asparagus? Visit metronews.ca to weigh in.

where Guelph Millennium comes in handy. Its yield per acre is double that of older asparagus varieties. That makes growing asparagus attractive to farmers.

In fact, in Ontario, acreage has increased to 3,400 acres — up 700 acres in just the past four years. And Guelph Millennium comprises 100 per cent of the new asparagus plantings in the province.

There's more. The same Guelph Millennium plant can be productive for more than 15 years. That's about twice as long as competitive varieties. Plus, it doesn't buckle when the mercury dives. Guelph Millennium is now grown as far north as Saskatoon. And thanks to Fox Seeds, Ontario asparagus growers' own brand, Guelph Millennium is even being registered for farmers in chilly Russia.

But while field performance is an important part of the Guelph Millennium story, there are other reasons it's a superstar variety, too.

First, it's high in vitamins such as folic acid, potassium, thiamine and B6. It's a decent source of fibre. And it's low in calories and sodium.

As well, in a happy coincidence, a study showed Guelph Millennium is blessed with significantly higher levels than any other asparagus variety of an antioxidant called rutin, also found in buckwheat, onions and black olives.

In the gut, bacteria convert rutin to a beneficial anti-inflammatory compound called quercetin.

Studies by former Guelph nutrition researcher Dr. Krista Power, now with the University of Ottawa, revealed that even at very low levels, rutin-rich

Guelph Millennium had extraordinary benefits. For example, it helped laboratory mice heal from intestinal damage caused by colitis, a condition that contributes to inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

Power is hopeful that further testing will show Guelph Millennium can similarly help humans suffering from chronic diseases such as IBD.

"I've profiled many different food-types for their ability to help ease IBD, and I believe rutin-rich asparagus like Guelph Millennium could be a super food for gut health," she says.

Guelph Millennium was developed with support from the Ontario asparagus industry, and from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Happy harvesting, and here's to healthy eating.

Are there antibiotics in meat?



Michelle Jaelin
Registered Dietitian, Toronto

I'm curious and a bit confused about the labels around antibiotics and food lately. I figured the best place to start is to ask a farmer why they even use antibiotics.



It's a simple question with lots of complicated answers.

I work hard caring for my animals, which includes keeping them healthy. A veterinarian can prescribe antibiotics if sick chickens need treatment, but that's rare. If we do have to treat, we follow strict withdrawal times to ensure no residues are in our meat. My family eats the same food yours does and we take our commitment to caring for chickens and producing healthy, affordable food seriously.



Andrea Veldhuizen
Chicken Farmer, Niagara Region

Let's continue the conversation #BestFoodFacts • @FoodIntegrityCA • www.BestFoodFacts.org

Oilers force Game 7

2017 NHL PLAYOFFS
CONFERENCE SEMIFINALS

Hat-trick hero Draisaitl ensures series goes to decider

The Edmonton Oilers are forcing the Anaheim Ducks to face their Game 7 playoff demons.

Their Western Conference semifinal is going the distance after Edmonton's decisive 7-1 victory Sunday. The winner of Wednesday's Game 7 in Anaheim meets the Nashville Predators in the conference final.

Leon Draisaitl led the Oilers with a hat trick with Mark Letestu scoring twice for the hosts. Edmonton also got goals from Zach Kassian and Anton Slep-

chev in front a euphoric wall of orange at Rogers Place.

Oilers goaltender Cam Talbot turned away 34 of 35 shots for the win. "Obviously the season was on the line and we all had to step it up a notch and the whole group did," Draisaitl said. Edmonton had sprinted to a six-goal lead by the first minute of the second period before the Ducks countered with a goal from Rickard Rakell.

The Oilers scoring three goals on their first six shots prompted Anaheim to replace John Gibson with Jonathan Bernier, who stopped 24 of 28 shots in relief.

Momentum has swung to Edmonton, while the Ducks are under pressure to reverse a trend. Anaheim has lost a Game 7 at home each of the last four years.

The Ducks were eliminated in the first rounds of 2016 (Nashville) and 2013 (Detroit), the second round of 2014 (Los

IN NASHVILLE

Ryan Johansen scored the game-winning goal 3:15 into the third period, and the Nashville Predators advanced to their first Western Conference final in franchise history Sunday by beating the St. Louis Blues 3-1 to take the series in six games. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Angeles) and the third round of 2015 (Chicago) in seventh games at the Honda Center. What's more, the Ducks led each of those series 3-2 before back-to-back losses ended their seasons.

"Even for us to come out in the second period and get that sixth goal, that was big," Letestu said. "We expect Game 7 to be a lot tighter."

THE CANADIAN PRESS



NBA PLAYOFFS RAPTORS SWEEP ASIDE BY CLEVELAND

Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James, right blocks Toronto Raptors guard DeMar DeRozan, left, during first half in Toronto on Sunday. James finished with 35 points as Cleveland won the series 4-0 to advance to the Eastern Conference final. THE CANADIAN PRESS/NATHAN DENETTE

Bombers have Faith in top pick

The Winnipeg Blue Bombers selected Iowa defensive lineman Faith Ekakitie first overall in the CFL draft Sunday night.

The move wasn't a surprise as the Bombers were reportedly in contract talks with the 24-year-old Brampton, Ont., native prior to the draft.

The six-foot-one, 304-pound Ekakitie had 37 tackles last season for Iowa (8-4), adding two tackles in the Hawkeyes' 30-3 loss to Florida in the Outback Bowl.

The Saskatchewan Roughriders took UCLA linebacker Cameron Judge at No. 2.

At third overall, the B.C. Lions took McMaster's Danny Vandervoort, a six-foot-two, 204-pound slotback who was a three-time All-Canadian. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dam dirty.

The Site C dam was first proposed in the 1950s — projects like it are based on outdated ideas about energy development. Newer technologies, like wind and solar, are becoming cheaper and more effective every year. These alternatives also create jobs, can be built as needed, and have a lower overall environmental impact.

www.justthedamfacts.ca

Source: Hendriks, R., Raphals, P. and K. Bakker (2017) Reassessing the need for Site C. Program on Water Governance, University of British Columbia: Vancouver.



Site C Dam

MAKE IT TODAY

Decadent Chocolate Raspberry Smoothie



PHOTO: MAYA VISNTEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

The classic pairing makes its debut in your morning smoothie making it a decadent but healthy way to start the day.

Ready in 10 minutes

Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 5 minutes
Serves 2

Ingredients

- 1 cup frozen raspberries
- 1/2 cup frozen strawberries

- 1/2 cup chocolate almond milk
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/4 cup plain Greek-style yogurt
- 1 Tbsp maple syrup
- 1 Tbsp chocolate chips or cacao nibs

Directions

1. Place all the ingredients in your blender and whiz until smooth.

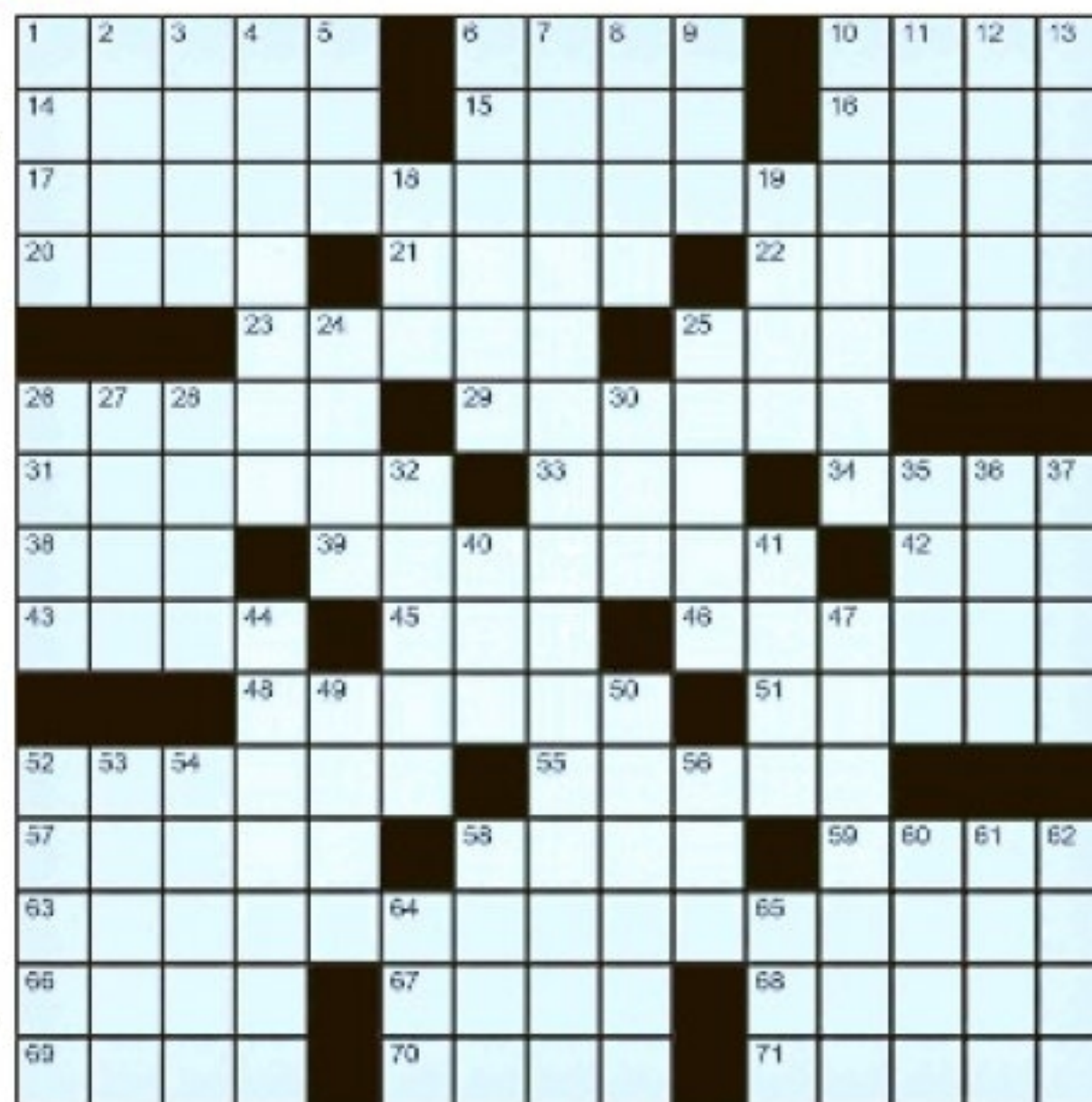
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CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN

ACROSS

1. Peppery salad herb, Garden _
6. _ daisy
10. _ seeds (Health food store purchase)
14. Ms. Kelly of "Friday Night Lights"
15. "You gotta be kidding!"
16. Hamilton's _ Village
17. Canadian drama which starred Nicholas Campbell as a Vancouver coroner: 3 wds.
20. Scrape, as spoken sound
21. Muffins-making milieu
22. Excessive
23. Rice dish
25. Dishes de-sudsing-izer
26. Presentation-giver's device, _ pointer
29. Mistaken-for-a-wolf animal
31. Open a gift
33. Mouse's lab pal
34. Certain chordophone
38. Comic actress Ms. Gasteyer
39. Made a witty remark
42. "Video Games" singer, Lana Del _
43. Mail org. in The States
45. Martial Art, _ Chi
46. Subdued
48. Charles or William or Harry
51. Mr. Millan aka 'The Dog Whisperer'
52. Backstreet Boys member A.J.
55. Characteristics of walrus



57. In the lead
58. Gigantic
59. Gull-like bird
63. Indigo and Coles in Canada: 2 wds.
66. Coastal bird
67. _ Sound, Ontario
68. Calgary neighbourhood

69. Television producer Norman
70. "If all _ fails..."
71. Painter's artwork base

DOWN

1. RCN rank
2. Music trade org.

3. E-Mails eliminate the need for 'em
4. "Gilligan's Island" role, with The 5. _ Diego
6. 1951 mainframe computer
7. Emulate a fashion model on a shoot: 3 wds.

8. Washer cycle
9. Yearning
10. England's nickname connected to France
11. Minds
12. Put forth
13. Michaelmas daisy
18. Row's opp., as on

- a spreadsheet
19. Leave a job
24. Baghdad's country
25. Routines
26. Honolulu banquet
27. Ms. Jillian's
28. Exchange
30. Slang-style mouth
32. Russian leader Vladimir
35. Latin for 'city'
36. Prefix meaning 'Trillion'
37. Observer
40. Sir McKellen
41. Wharf
44. Parliament Hill job, _ of the House
47. Telephone _ (What the caller left)
49. Vintage house heaters, for short
50. Playwright Mr. O'Neill
52. Silent movies star Ms. Normand (b.1892 - d.1930)
53. Lopping the lawn or doing the dusting
54. "Bleeding Love" singer Ms. Lewis
56. L'il bit of "60 Minutes"
58. Wolf's wail
60. "The _ in the Hall" (Canadian sketch classic)
61. Some, in French: Quelques- _
62. "It should come _ surprise that..."
64. Shoe part
65. Take it all

* IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
This is a prickly Monday, so be cautious. Close friends and partners will surprise you by being moody or demanding, or wanting more freedom. Tread carefully!

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Your routine will be interrupted today by computer crashes, canceled appointments, power outages — something. Give yourself extra time so that you will have wiggle room to deal with this.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
This is an accident-prone day for your kids, so be vigilant. Social occasions might be canceled or rescheduled. Ditto for sports. Yikes!

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Small appliances might break down, or minor breakages could occur because your home routine will be interrupted. A surprise visitor might knock on your door. Stock the fridge.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
This is a mildly accident-prone day. Pay attention to everything you say and do. Keep your eyes open to avoid a physical accident or verbal gaffes.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Keep an eye on your money today, because something unpredictable might happen. You might find money, or you might lose money. Your possessions might be stolen, broken or lost.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
It's hard to predict what people will do today. And you feel the same way, which is why you might change your mind spontaneously today and take off in a new direction.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You feel restless today. You have the feeling like you're waiting for the other shoe to drop. Don't bother — it is invariably ugly and in the wrong size.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
A friend will surprise you today by saying or doing something unusual. Conversely, you might meet someone who's a real character.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Be careful when talking to bosses, parents and VIPs today, because things will not unfold as you expect. Do not be offended.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Travel plans will change today — almost certainly. Double-check details, and make sure you know what's happening.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Agreements about shared property, taxes, debt and inheritances might suddenly fall through today or be changed. Stay on top of this so that you are not caught off guard. In a situation like this, information is power.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9



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**THERE'S
A DREAM
WE SHOULD
ALL KNOW
ABOUT.**

**A MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER
PLACE KIND OF DREAM.**

**IN THIS DREAM, WE ALL GET
TO WHERE WE WANT TO GO.**

**THERE ARE LESS LADDERS.
MORE HELPING HANDS.**

**SUCCESS IS MEASURED
DIFFERENTLY IN THIS DREAM.**

**HOW MUCH YOU MAKE A
DIFFERENCE IS MORE IMPORTANT
THAN HOW MUCH YOU MAKE.**

**AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCES
ARE MORE VALUABLE THAN
PERSONAL POSSESSIONS.**

**IN THIS DREAM, PEOPLE
CARE ABOUT PEOPLE
THEY'VE NEVER MET.**

**AND THE BIG IMPORTANT
CHOICES ARE MADE FOR OUR
KIDS' FUTURE, NOT JUST OURS.**

YOU CAN SPEAK ANY LANGUAGE.

LOVE WHO YOU WANT TO LOVE.

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME
IN THIS DREAM.**

THIS IS THE CANADIAN DREAM.

**AND IT'S INSPIRING US
TO FIND NEW ROADS
AS A CAR COMPANY.**

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CHEVROLET
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